

Episcopal Church of the Epiphany

Vestry Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2022

In Attendance:

Vestry - Erin Braden, Paul Hinson, Richard Messner, Bert Bender, Lisa Daily, Peter Dodge, Liefy Smith, Kaylie Gibbs, Paige Howell, Susan Ashmore, & April Maa

Ex officio -, Randy Shearin & Sherry Wallace

Visitors: Julie Ryder

Absent: John Wierwille & Shelle Bryant

Meditation: Amy led a meditation on gratitude.

New Business:

Organ Maintenance:

Julie discussed the process of organ tuning. Funds from bequests by Sarah Jane Wollison and Sylvia Ethridge are available to cover the cost. Paige motioned that the vestry authorize Julie to move forward with the tuning at a cost of \$7,747. Bert seconded and all voted in favor.

Endowment Board Members:

Brian Gross and Susan Moody are cycling off the Endowment Board. Peter nominated Craig McDonald and Doug Runnion to fill the vacancies. Liefy seconded. All voted in favor.

Fence for Preschool:

The preschool wants a more permanent fence surrounding their area in the woods. They will cover all costs, with no expense to the church, and want vestry approval. There were no major objections, but more information is needed regarding the specs, such as type of fencing, exact location, etc. Amy will gather additional details from the preschool and bring it to a future vestry meeting.

Harvey Fund Recommendations:

There were four grants recommended for funding by the Harvey fund. ECW approved these and sent them to the vestry for final approval. Erin moved we accept these four. Peter seconded. All voted to approve.

Finance report.

Randy reported that year-to-date expense exceed revenue by about \$38,000.

Priest in Charge's Report:

Stewardship – We will be asking vestry to help make calls to those who have not yet pledged. We should have that list soon. Our current total is \$431,000.

Amy shared a sheet from annual council on attendance and giving statistics from around the diocese and noted that engagement with the parish happens more than just on Sunday morning. We continue to look for new ways for people to connect. We had thirty people at last week's family eucharist.

Amy discussed the work that has been done on core values. She will regather the group working on core values after the parish discussion last week to refine the values based on the feedback. We will bring those back to the larger group and then back to the parish. Amy feels that involving them in the process is important. Then we will move on to priorities, where we want to concentrate our energy and resources. Are there things we need to let go of in order to deepen our work in the areas that we think are priorities?

Amy will host a Christmas party for vestry and staff at her house on Dec 9.

Leadership Edge Discussion:

The vestry discussed chapters 19-21 of Leadership Edge.

Old Business:

Both family ministry and outreach need attention. Nicole had been worked on these. One vestry subgroup will look at salaries around the diocese. Another will work with Finance to consider how to do the budget differently to meet our needs.

Consent Agenda:

Approval of the October 2022 vestry minutes and gifts over \$100 were included as part of the consent agenda. All voted to accept.

The meeting ended with noontday prayer.



Upcoming Dates:







Dec. 18 – Vestry meeting
Jan. 6 – Epiphany
Jan-Feb TBD – Installation
Jan 22 Vestry meeting – Priorities Discussion
Jan. 29 – Parish Annual Meeting
Feb. 11-12 – Vestry Retreat

Respectfully submitted,
Sherry Wallace
Clerk of the Vestry

November 2022 Vestry Reports

Building and Grounds — Bert Bender

Issues on Front Burners (FB), Back Burners (BB) and On The Counter (OTC): The failure to deliver a Buildings/Grounds report last month was doubtless taken as a sign that all is well, everything is done, the list of BANG (Building an' Grounds) issues was cleared. Uh, not true. I blame the failure to post on Elon Musk because why not. So here is the post-Twitter list of projects and issues showing ups  and downs  since last time.

- 1) (unchanged, but sigh of relief) **Nave and Office/Bathroom HVAC Construction Work (FB):** DeKalb County evidently happy. Mechanical/Electrical/Structural/Architectural inspections 11/15 get generally high marks; some minor punch list items remain. If you see something say something, preferably by email to bert.bender@alston.com.
- 2) ( from 7 plagues in Exodus) **Choir Office Precipitation (FB):** Water dripping from the ceiling into Julie's office is related to the new basement HVAC system below actually turning humidity into H2O condensate misting up exhaust pipes then draining down in drips into her office. (*The sentence that follows is "Parody" per Twitter terms of service*) New HVAC design and reconstruction to commence replacement of the entire second floor HVAC. (*end Parody Sentence*) McKenney's and Johnson Spellman evaluating – may just need vent sealing.
- 3) ( from off the list) **Composter (FB):** A Composter has been ordered by the Earth Guild for location and use on the Epiphany Campus. We'll chat about location. More soon.
- 4) ( from 10) **Front Door Physics (FB):** Various parties looking at conundrum of the front doors: sometimes too cold (doors gap), sometimes too warm (doors stick). Cinderella Goal of Just Right evidently not found so far. So further review needed. And let's think about a better door code security system (video?).
- 5) ( from 7) **Lighting (FB):** Delay in installing the Drop Pendants for the Side Chapel turns out to be normal multi-month delay – will meet with contractor after Thanksgiving for install in January. If you have comments on any lights, email bert.bender@alston.com as we'll add to their final list as needed.
- 6) ( from 12) **FFA Byrdland (FB)** There are ideas about use of Byrdland – blueberry bushes planted as a starter. If you have ideas on this or want to be part of the conversation, email bert.bender@alston.com.
- 7) ( from 2) **Roof Leaks / Gutters (FB):** Leak in Gallery near Narthex when it pours – some concern also about gutters. (*Parody*) Problem postponed: Sonny Perdue [prayed for no rain](#). (*end Parody*) Turning to long list of roofing repair contractors. If you have a special roofing contractor you like, email bert.bender@alston.com.

- 8) (↓ from 3) **Baptistry Doors Punch List (FB)**: As long as we look at gutters from on top of the roof, let's have the roof/gutter people we select look at water flow over these doors and offer a fix and estimate.
- 9) (↓ from 4) **Asphalt Patching (BB)**: Comment: shouldn't we patch cracked asphalt parts at entrance and exit drives, maybe starting with temporary volunteer fix? Answer: maybe, but if we need professional help, let's focus on that part and develop a plan of (a) where? (b) anywhere else? (c) who should do it? and (d) ensure good price. All comments invited. If you have a special paving contractor you like, email bert.bender@alston.com.
- 10) (↓ from 8) **Building an' Grounds (BANG) Structure, or Emerging Endless List of "Things to Do" (FB)**: Circulated in March. QR code email collection from Ministry Fair flyer yielded nada. Entering Realm. Maybe hold a Buildings reception in the Undercroft to see the new Unit.
- 11) (unchanged) **Courtyard Fence (BB)** If you have comments on this, email bert.bender@alston.com.
- 12) (↑ from 13) **Maintenance Contracts (Inventory of Systems) (BB)** Will be updating HVAC list after McKenney's Punch List labeling. Inventory report received and in review, along with Maintenance Contract.
- 13) (↑ from 16) **Sexton Services (OTC)** At some point the informal volunteer sexton approach to identifying maintenance issues, handling minor repairs, coordinating minor contractors, and other stuff normally done by a Sexton will no longer be sustainable.
- 14) (unchanged) **Playground Reconstruction (OTC)**: Invoices submitted to insurance – awaiting final payout or update about status (maybe it's in). Maybe picnic table plan, but no pressure on that right now.
- 15) (unchanged) **Landscaping Company (OTC)**: When more urgent stuff addressed, will seek input and review.

Off the list: "HVAC Repairs That Are Not So Big and Scary", as the Emily's Room thermostat is fixed and the new blower blows in the Parish Hall Northwest sector (Room C?), "Weed and Wine Party" (done, fun) and "Yellowjackets" (cold).

Children & Youth – Emily Elder, Paige Howell

Sunday Morning Formation continues to happen each week, but attendance is somewhat unpredictable. Our youth formation class usually draws about **2-5 students**, our Godly Play classroom between **3-5 students**, with the biggest variation in our 4th and 5th grade classroom. Two weeks ago (11/6) there were **9 children present**, but last week we had **2 children**. Youth Group continues to draw **5-10 youth** each week.

Our Tuesday evenings at Epiphany have offered a wonderful new routine! We currently have **6 children** regularly attending choir practice as “beginning choristers” (pre-K through 2nd grade) and several older kids will begin to join on Tuesday, November 29 as members of the “junior choir” (3rd grade through unchanged voices). While the children practice singing, their siblings and parents have been helping out with a variety of service projects. So far, we have packed hygiene bags for Holy Comforter, written holiday cards for the Gateway Center, and cooked a meal for the L’Arche Community. This past week, on Tuesday, November 15, we offered a Family Eucharist Service after choir practice and the service project, which was attended by **6 families and over 25 people**. We hope to continue offering these services once a month, beginning in the new year.

We have several special children’s and youth events coming up during the season of Advent and the new year, and would appreciate any adult volunteers and word-of-mouth advertising. See below for these upcoming events:

- Now - December 11: Shoe Drive
- Saturday, December 3 @ 9-10:30 AM: Advent Cookie Baking with youth, children, & families
- Sunday, December 11 @ 11:15 AM: St Nicholas Day event before formation classes
- Friday, January 6 @ TBD: Epiphany Pageant
- January - March: Youth Confirmation

Finance - Richard Messner

Update from Bookkeeper Susie Boyko:

October operating results: MTD deficit of \$11,988, bringing YTD deficit to \$38,403; last year's October YTD results were \$74K surplus.

October MTD:

Revenues were below budget by \$9,159. The shortfall was in giving, especially Pledges.

Expenses:

6211 Youth Director Insurance and 6220 Youth Director 403(b) contribution \$1,450 actual vs 0 budget. Although not budgeted, Vestry approved these expenses.

6606 Technology Platform Fees \$1,749 actual vs 0 budget. After Amy and Nicole's review, I established this account for expenses such as ACS, ZOOM, BOINX fees. October's result is the result of transferring charges from other accounts.

6840 Utilities - Electric \$2,744 actual vs \$1,250 budget. As HVAC is now working and the building is occupied, electricity usage is back to pre-Pandemic levels.

6860 Property Insurance \$2,277.50 vs \$792 budget. We paid a quarterly insurance premium in October.
7400 Parish Life \$1,067 vs \$333 budget. I transferred \$823 for Parish Picnic food from 8703 Parish Picnic Fund. We now account for activities not directly supported by Epiphany in Parish Life revenue / expense.

Membership - Liefy Smith

- Our Fall Newcomers Gathering was a nice success- November 13, 2022 4-5 pm. Four couples and three singles came for a total of 11 newcomers attending.
- The Membership Committee and the Art Ministry Photo sessions are completed. The final number of 18 parishioner households signed up for this opportunity. Shea will be sent a few photos from each family to include in the directory.

Pastoral Care – Lisa Daily

The Pastoral Care Committee is sending Christmas cards to parishioners 75 years and older.

The Community of Hope is sponsoring Walk with Me, a short one-act play written and performed by acclaimed actress and Epiphany member Carolyn Cook. Walk with Me is a story of a woman caring for her mother, who lives with dementia. Anne McSweeney, a licensed clinical social worker, will also be present to share her perspectives on resources and ways to support both caregivers and the person with dementia. The free performance will take place in the Epiphany nave on Monday, November 28, at 7:30 p.m.

The Community of Hope meets monthly. Parishioners in need continue to receive visits, calls and cards.

Members of the Pastoral Care Committee are Cecelia Democko, David Draper (Chair), Susan Moody, Nancy Thompson and Sherry Wallace.

Community of Hope's Leadership Team is comprised of Jessica Burns, Lisa Daily, David Draper and Ann Fowler. Additional members are: Barbara Belcore, Laura Gary, Lisa Gray, Paul Hinson, Chris Miller, Katie Pederson and Annie Strahan.

Stewardship - Kaylie Gibbs

The Stewardship Committee, led by Pam Tipton, led a very successful Stewardship campaign this season. We've seen engaging social media posts and meaningful Epiphany Star messages, as well as heard poignant messages from our parishioners. Following the Ingathering celebration last Sunday, the Finance committee confirmed that we had exceeded our goal of 65 households pledged, achieved 78% (\$448k out of goal of \$575k) of our monetary goal, which continues to grow, and that we are ahead of our monetary goals at this point in time as compared to this same point last year.

While the campaign is officially closed, the Stewardship season continues through the end of the year. The committee will debrief next week on their work this season and start to personally follow up with past pledgers that have not yet submitted pledges for this year.

I'm very encouraged by how well our parish responded to the Stewardship campaign and how so many folks got engaged with sharing stories and thoughts on the tree in the gallery. I would love the opportunity to take any feedback that any of you have for the Stewardship committee on how we can enhance this process for next year.

Adult Formation – Paul Hinson

Ann Fowler and Liefy are working with Amy on Pondering Images of Mary in Art for two weeks in Advent, in addition to our already scheduled wreath making and other activities. Amy and I will be meeting in December to talk about what we'll be offering in January forward. We'll be finishing up the final single-session installment in the Faith After Doubt book after January 1.

We'll be discussing any Lenten offerings and there is some interest from multiple parties in leading book study groups.

Outward Facing Ministries – Susan Ashmore

I hosted a dessert/fellowship meeting at our house for the Outward Facing Ministries committee on Thursday, Nov 17th. It was a chance to thank Nicole Lambelet for her leadership and guidance and to hear from committee members about their recent work and upcoming plans. We heard about what the Art Ministry, Refugee Family update, news about blueberry planting and ordering a composter from the parish through the Earth Guild, and the continued connections serving dinner at the Gateway Center. Nicole talked to us about an Episcopal Church in Richmond, Virginia, that is opening its church space to others in the community as a way of introducing people to the parish. The connection is made through these service projects that has led to new membership in the parish. For example, a farmers market sets up in the church parking lot, at the end of the market the leftovers are made into a soup that is used to feed others and then also part of the Compline service. She also noted that Emilie is serving as the contact person connecting our youth with the Ismaili community for an MLK day project. Erin Braden and I will serve as the touch stones for the various outward facing ministries in Nicole's absence. We plan to meet again in January.

Proposed improvement to the organ

November 18, 2022

Julie Ryder, Organist and Choirmaster

Epiphany's Bedient Organ (Opus 54, 1997) has settled into the new and improved climate in our nave. During the Covid-19 lockdown and during our time with no heat or air conditioning, the instrument behaved fairly well; while we had temporary air conditioning this summer, the very high humidity caused some problems, but the humidity control with the new HVAC has restored order.

In 2013, the tuner and steward of our organ, Robert Coulter, performed a full tuning of our organ. This involved removing all of the pipes, revoicing one rank, servicing the remaining ranks, replacing them in their appointed spots and re-tuning. The organ hasn't had a full tuning since then (because of the time involved) and is in need. Mr. Coulter is proposing adding tuning slides to aid in tuning and to also make the organ equal tempered in tuning. Below is part of the proposal:

Dear Julie,

It has been a pleasure to work with you in the revoicing and stabilization of the Bedient organ at The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany. Below we have updated the bid for a combination action, with thumb & toe pistons. As well as added for installing tuning slides throughout the organ. This will enable easier tuning when needed, as well as the modification of the current tuning temperament into something more palatable.

2) While the method of construction chosen by Bedient is historical, and VERY stable over time his other choices weren't as wise. In the current method, the pipes are cut to exact lengths during the finishing process, this is very time intensive as well as effectively locks in the tuning temperament chosen at the temperature and pitch of the organ during that final phase of work. In this instance, the temperament chosen was not only unequal, but antiquated to the point of being a challenge in a modern (19th century and later) church service. Also, the choices made in constructing the pipes is less than ideal for any potential changes in that the pipes of a metal makeup that is mostly lead (a historically based choice). The issue being lead is soft in high percentages as we find here, making even tuning the pipes in the manner currently demanded very challenging.

We would in a rare suggestion say converting the tuning method to that of a moveable tuning slide (as is found in 80% of North American pipe organs), would be the best choice. This system allows for regular tuning as needed with no concern for damage to the pipe as part of that process. Also, by their very existence would allow a tuning temperament (equal or not) to be chosen to best suit the needs of the church. As part of this work, every pipe would be again carefully regulated for the space to ensure excellent tone and speech throughout the organ.

Tuning Slide Installation: \$7,747.00

The price is good for 90 days from the proposal (October 17, 2022) and includes all labor, materials, shipping and expenses. Money from the music endowment (acct. 8500) will be used to pay for this improvement.

As an aside, Coulter Organbuilders made one other improvement to the organ in 2015: an additional wind chest was added in the undercroft to make the wind pressure more stable.

Harvey Fund – 2022 Proposed Grants

To Disburse \$19,299.99 in Funds

Project Transformation North Georgia - \$5,000 request approved by the Harvey Fund Board and ECW Members.

This is a summer program for 5-12 year-old children. This program brings together young adults, inner generational volunteers, churches, and community members to help elementary children get to their proper reading level, by preventing the summer slide. 66% of GA 3rd graders are not reading on level.

The Global Village Project, Inc. \$5,000 request approved by the Harvey Fund Board and ECW Members.

In order to excel in the Literacy classroom, GVP students depend on a strong foundation and ongoing development of their social-emotional competencies: self-awareness, social awareness and self-management. Female refugees, English language learners, girls (whose education is often deprioritized) students of color, and predominantly low-income, first-generation students. Access to English and to literacies of different kinds will empower students by opening their minds and doors to new opportunities.

Our House, Inc. \$5,000 request approved by the Harvey Fund Board and ECW Members.

We provide:

Early Childhood Education

- 73% of children served who were enrolled for 90 days or more achieved developmentally appropriate milestones
- 100% of children identified as having special needs received timely referrals for intervention services

Employment Training Services

- 61% of graduates passed the Child Development Associate exam and earned the CDA credential
- 95% of graduates gained employment within 3 months of program completion

Housing & Family Services

- 55% of unemployed parents gained employment and/or entered a job training/educational program
- 59% of families made meaningful improvement to their housing stability

Church of the Epiphany - Refugee Ministries - This was approved by the Harvey Fund Board and ECE Members - \$4,299.99

Epiphany Refugee Ministry currently supports the Khil family from Afghanistan. We feel these funds will help this family with shelter, food and clothing. This money would be handled by the Epiphany Refugee Ministry to help the Khil family (and other refugee families) as needed.